ROSS ROADS

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THE JOURNAL OF THE RURAL WORKERS' FELLOWSHIP OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?
(Psalm 116:12)

THE RURAL WORKERS' FELLOWSHIP OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH, INC.

(Incorporated under the laws of the State of New York)

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The Country Home

As one born in the country.
Ezekiel 47:22

HE country home is less changed. The small town way of living is similar to that of the country. In home work, the family works together, each at his task. The isolated farm home of Whittier's "Snowbound" is almost completely gone. The small town and country home can ow have all the conveniences of urban centers.

The home is still the center of country living. Kinship still links together many in the neighborhood. A larger percentage of people on farms re married than of those in cities. Children on the farm are an economic ain and the purpose of God is served by families in which children are ot limited by love of luxury.

The country home has its needs. It needs more health work, public and rivate. The country school is unequal in most states to the urban. Country ildren need to be educated so they can stay in the rural areas, although ey also need to be educated for the urban centers where most of them ill go. They do not need to be educated away from the country. Wholeome recreation is still lacking in many rural areas. Control of erosion can e that there remains land to be farmed. Governmental aid to the farmer as essential as it is to the business man. Parity means that the farmer ould get as fair a share of national income as anyone else. Fairer taxation, n incomes and luxuries, should replace unfair taxation of farm land. etter local and state government is a crying need of most farm areas. nd better homes can be created.

The country home and the farm are a way of making a living, but also way of life. You can live well on the farm and learn the love of the reator of all.

—oOo—

The New Presiding Bishop

CROSSROADS congratulates the Episcopal Church on our new preding bishop. Qualified by experience in various aspects of the church's ork, devoted to her task of reaching people in all places, consecrated efficient use of time and money, friendly to all varieties of churchanship and dominated by none, it is an achievement of General Conention to give us such a leader. We know that he will carry on the adancing work in town and country which has been begun under Bishop errill. We know that he understands town and country work, and we call when his father-in-law served a one Sunday a month church in Iississippi. The social message of the faith will never be ignored while e is presiding bishop and a message of good will to all will be presented. Ve shall cooperate with him in all the tasks he can find, and pray God's chest blessing of strength and courage, of humility and humor, of friendness and faith to continue to be his.

A Message From the New President

Dear Rural Workers,

Meeting the people who were at the Convocation was to me the most important aspect of the whole affair. Although the speakers, the seminars and the views of various people might have been excellent, yet it was in the actual contact with others engaged in similar work to mine that gave me a great lift!

The Rural Workers' Fellowship is not able to bring all of its members together at any one time, so that each of us could get to know others of the R.W.F. by sight and hearing, but what the R.W.F. tries to do is to help Town & Country Church work by making possible a closer relationship between the workers.

You seem to get so little from membership in R.W.F. until you realize that through it you are walking arm-in-arm with many others under that common and wonderful bond—devotion to Jesus Christ and to the country and townsfolk God has committed to our care!

Pray for me, please, as I shall pray for you, in this our mutual experience.

John Peacock
President

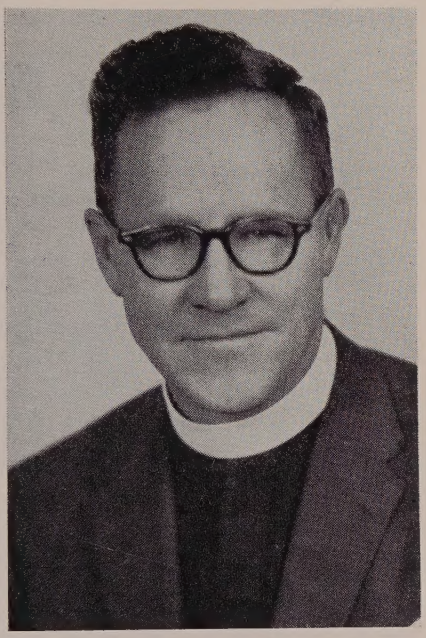
—oOo—

The Church That Gets the Country Gets the Country

"The church that gets the country gets the country." So Rev. Clifford Samuelson reminded General Convention, in the words of his opposite number in the Roman communion, Msgr. Ligutti, one of the great rural church leaders of our day. He pointed out the advance from the period of low salaries, inadequate rectories, unworthy standards and forgotten pastors to the present improvements. He pointed out how allowances for study and conferences enable men renewed in spirituality to return to their fields more dedicated. To continue training 130 clergy a year at Roanridge and provincial centers, he asked for an increase of $20,000 in the budget. 1946 gave the first real appropriation our church had ever given for town and country work, and 1949 increased this. "From small towns come our country and college folk," he reminded the joint session; "This is an era that to our peril we neglect."

There were many town and country clergy at the Miami Beach convention, but many of them were not deputies. The progress in domestic missions was made plain in several meetings, and much of this is in town and country. Copies of *Crossroads* were available at the convention and hundreds picked them up. We hope some of you are now reading the first issue to which you have subscribed.

OUR NEW PRESIDENT



John Peacock was born in St. John, New Brunswick, Canada, on October 22, 1910.

From 1915 to 1940 he lived in Montreal, Quebec, made a Deacon in 1937, Ordained to the Priesthood in 1938, and was curate in a city church until December 1939 at which time moved to the Parish of Nelsonville, Cowansville, Quebec, and Sweetsburg, Quebec, on a temporary basis, but stayed on to become Rector and is still there.

Editor of an independent rural paper, The Church, Farm and Town. Variously Chairman and Secretary of the Rural Life & Work Committee of the Diocese of Montreal for 11 years.

Author of a book, "Rural Prophets, Priest and Pastors" being lectures in Rural Sociology given at the Mono Mills School and elsewhere.

Married Audrey McKeown in 1942. Two sons, Michael and David, aged 14 and 12 respectively. Scout and Cub Leader for 31 years. Owns and operates a Church Boys Camp, "Gale Camp for Church Boys." Founder of The Missisquoi Community School, which is in its 16th year and of which he was Chairman for 7 years, this being a segment of the Canadian Adult Education Association.

Rural Workers' Fellowship Award in 1955, Board of Directors RWF, President of the Cowansville Home & School Association 1958-59; secretary of Clericis & Chapter Deanery of Bedford, Diocese of Montreal; chairman of Youth Rally Committee, Archdeaconry of Bedford.

Lecturer in Rural Sociology to Diocese of Newfoundland Clergy Seminar 1953; to Montreal Diocesan Rural Seminar 1956-58; Diocese of Toronto Rural School in 1949-50-51. Missioner—to children at St. Cyprian's Church, Montreal; parish on the Music of the Liturgy. Liturgiologist to Anglican Fellowship for Social Action 1956 & 1957.

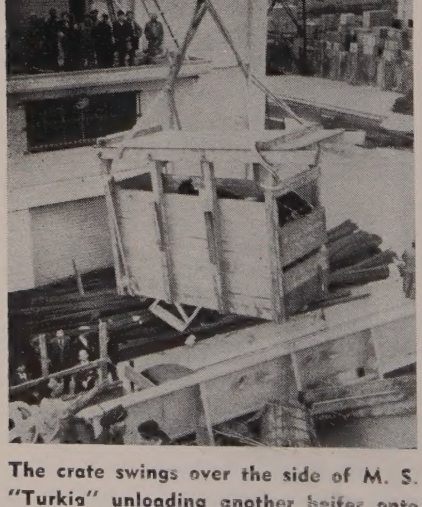
A Journey With Ten Heifers

By ARLO W. COTTRELL,
Farm Manager
Roanridge Farm, Parkville, Mo.

IT WAS an irresistible temptation for a midwest farmer to be offered the opportunity to accompany a shipment of ten Holstein dairy heifers and one bull from New York to Istanbul, Turkey. I had never been to New York, had never seen a ship bigger than a river steamer and had only faint ideas of people and living conditions in far away lands. Consequently when the Greek freighter *Turkia* left Pier 45, New York at 5:30 p. m. on

Mr. Cottrell and Mrs. Went Van der Vring pose with the Holstein bull before unloading.

Saturday, March 29, 1958, I was aboard. In this brief article I hope first of all to give some idea of the importance of the project of which my journey was a small part; and secondly, to give just a few of my



The crate swings over the side of M. S. "Turkia" unloading another heifer onto Turkish soil.

A truck bearing "precious cargo" begins its journey from the docks to Balikli Hospital through the streets of Istanbul

any impressions and experiences ained from this "once-in-a-life-me" trip.

My services as caretaker of the ttle supplied by the Episcopal hurch as a part of its contribution Heifer Project, Inc., of Windsor, aryland, an interfaith relief and habilitation organization that nds contributed livestock and poul-y to war ruined and agriculturally ndeveloped countries. Heifer Proj-t, Inc. has done much towards put-ng cattle, hogs,goats, sheep, rab-ts, bees, chickens, and turkeys; at o cost to the recipients; into needy nds all over the world. Our church the parish level and individual urchmen who have such interests uld do a great deal more to help is worthy organization.

In the case of the cattle I cared r, they went as a gift of the Amer-an people to the Balikli Hospital Istanbul, Turkey, to supply fresh ilk. Operated under the general spices of the Greek Orthodox urch, this philanthropic hospital s very little money but apparently es wonderful work among its av-age of 650 patients. I was told at first class patients pay one dol-r a day, second class pay some-ing less than a dollar, and third ass pay nothing, but all are given good care as the limited means ill provide. The reception I re-ived when I arrived with the cat-e at the hospital was worth all my a-sick hours during the 23 days om New York. The cattle were tually received on behalf of the spital by the Church and it was y special privilege as a part of this ception to have a luncheon en-gagement with His All Holiness, Patriarch Athenagoras. He was a fine gentleman: a large, tall man in his sixties, with a full white beard and attired as he was in his long black robe and traditional head cov-ering, he presented a striking pic-ture. Our visit began according to Greek custom with us sharing from a common bowl some powdered sugar paste, which we dipped out with tiny silver spoons. I was told this was to insure that we should have a sweet taste in our mouths and that there should be sweet words and thoughts between us—not a bad idea!

Through some mistake, the cat-tle were not expected for two weeks when we arrived, so no arrange-ments had been made for them; how-ever some quick work by a Dutch lady, Mrs. Went Van der Vring of the World Council of Churches of-fice in Istanbul, facilitated our un-loading and delivery operations. In-cidentally, I reached Istanbul with twelve head of cattle rather than the original ten heifers and a bull. Yes, while we rested in Port at Genoa, Italy, a calf was born amidst much excitement from dock hands, ship's crew, and port authorities. Anyway, everyone at the hospital was delighted with the cattle and one of the first things to be done was to put a string of beads around the neck of the calf. I did not fully understand the significance of this act but I know they felt it would somehow protect the cattle from harm. From the appearance of the native cattle, though, I felt this was more than mere superstition and I am confident they would be well

cared for. In addition there would be a visit from a dairy specialist (an American) shortly after my departure who would assist in planning a program for the proper handling of the cattle.

Now, having said this much about the cattle, I would like to go over the voyage and my return to add some points which were of great interest to me since my experience in traveling had been so limited. Our passage was from New York to Genoa, where our several days in port provided a wonderfully interesting background for my first experiences in a foreign land. From there we sailed to the Greek Island of Syros, where we dry-docked for a day to allow for cleaning and painting the bottom of the ship. There were 12 passengers aboard the "Turkia" including Mr. and Mrs. Fred Sprague of the State of Washington, who voluntarily cared for the cattle during my worst seasickness. This stop at Syros enabled us to go ashore where it seemed we had stepped back 100 years or more. In spite of some electricity and a few automobiles, transportation was mostly on foot or by the donkeys which could be seen everywhere, with big baskets on their backs or pulling carts. The streets were paved with marble slabs. We were humbled to be in the midst of poverty where there was such evidence of hard work and thrift. I was reminded that in many corn fields in Missouri we waste more bushels of corn per acre than their infertile land could produce. We could have spent more time with these friendly people.

Our next stop was Piraeus, the port of Athens, where five of us spent the day visiting the National Museum, the Acropolis, Parthenon, Olympic Stadium and many other points which I remembered studying about in school but never dreamed I would see. In a few more days we reached Istanbul where we were obliged to drop anchor about a mile out in the harbor and wait to unload the cattle for three days while some local holiday was celebrated. To add to my difficulties, when we did begin to unload, was the discovery that there were no stock trucks to take the cattle to the hospital, but only flat-bed trucks with sides about 30 inches high. I was frantic that my heifers which I had cared for all the way from New York should have to be taken through the Istanbul traffic in this manner. However, we somehow got each heifer out of the big crate which swung them over the side of the ship and lowered them to the dock, and placed them by two's on the trucks. We tied their halters securely to the truck and passed a rope over their backs and fastened that to the sides of the truck. They miraculously all arrived safely at their new home at the hospital.

At Istanbul because of the kindness of Mrs. Van der Vring and her Volkswagen driven by an Algerian and her secretary who could speak six or seven languages, I was able to visit the Shrine of St. Sophia, the Sultan's Palace, the Old Bazaar, the Cistern, and many other places of interest. On April 27th, my birthday, I attended services in a little Unitarian Church on the ground

Turkish dock hands show affection for the calf born at sea.

f the Dutch Embassy and strangely nough felt at home in this Moslem ountry thousands of miles from my amily.

At this point, however, I began ny return trip which took me by ir to Athens, Rome, Milan, Genoa, aris, and back to good old U.S.A.— New York and home to Kansas City. From this blur of one experince upon another as the plane vhisked me from place to place vith only brief stops, my fondest ecollection is of my visit to the omeland of my ancestors at the ittle village of Oey Diemtegen, bout 30 minutes by train from ern, Switzerland. I was fortunate o visit during a valley festival vhich gave me the opportunity of eeing the Simmentaler cows on pade with flowers on their horns and big bells on their necks, and to hear real Swiss yodeling and the music of the Alps horns. This brief visit with my cousins and their neighbors dressed in their colorful native costumes was a fitting climax to the whole experience of my jorney.

I was grateful for a safe return after being gone just six weeks, out of which 23 days were aboard ship and 44 hours in the air. It was a great experience for me and it is satisfying to me to have taken part in this completely worthwhile project which is doing its share of making men brothers around the world and helping us to live up to our Lord's expectation that we should visit the hungry and oppressed and care for their needs.

Mr. Cottrell and one of the ten dairy heifers he accompanied to Istanbul.

CROSSROADS belongs to you. We welcome your contributions. We will publish as many as we have space for. We are particularly interested in your comments on the York convocation. Your name will be withheld if desired, but we can not publish unsigned communications.

—oOo—

Of 547 churches receiving 1,442 certificates of merit in Iowa in 28 years, only 1 is Episcopal. Knowing the fine rural work done by some of our churches in that diocese, it is evident that some are not receiving their just praise.

—oOo—

The Communist Manifesto said something about "the idiocy of rural life." Soviet Communism has been least successful in rural areas. A sound rural life keeps a nation sound.

—oOo—

A prominent sociologist criticizes "the chronic moralism of Protestantism and its insistence on formulating its moral judgments of city life on the rural ethic." Urban anonymity, alcoholism, feverish activism are not necessarily virtues. The Puritanical ethic of the New Testament is urban, but not suburban.

YORK: Not How, But Why

THE York Convocation set a milestone in the history of town and country church conferences in this nation. Theology replaced sociology as the center of the focus of such work at the National Convocation of the Church in Town and Country of the National Council of Churches which met at York, Pa., October 21-23. Members of the Rural Workers Fellowship should feel gratified over this advance, for although it would be Anglican arrogance to claim credit for the total change in orientation which has been going on in recent years, the Episcopal delegates have more than done their share in this deepening of thought and action. The primary credit is probably due to the delegation from the Canadian church who came to Salina in 1954 insisting at that convocation that we could not get beyond techniques until we understood the rationale for our projects and plans. They won support from several denominations. And it was appropriate that at York the presidency of the Rural Workers Fellowship was entrusted to Rev. John Peacock of Quebec, a leader in this theological rural concern.

This elevation of interest of the convocation was well summarized in the final address of the session by Rev. Richard Comfort, and is published, with some omissions, in this issue of CROSSROADS. He is resigning after years of capable leadership of the rural church movement to assume a similar position with international missions. He is a member of the Rural Workers Fellowship and we are proud of his past leadership, his present contributions, and the future work he will accomplish.

The outstanding feature of the Episcopal Conference held concurrently at York was the devotions on the work of a rural pastor by Rev. James A. Butler of Cheneyville, La., one of the senior members of our Fellowship, whose ministry has been spent entirely in town and country. The eighty odd Episcopalians were only behind Presbyterians and Methodists at the convocation in quantity, and represented over 30 dioceses in the two countries. The special offering was given to St. Barnabas Church, Jenkinsville, S. C., a colored congregation which in years without a rector improved its community physically and spiritually and sent several members into the ministry. The awards of the Fellowship for the year will appear in CROSSROADS in detail later. New officers include Rt. Rev. Wilson Hunter of Wyoming, Honorary President; Rev. John Peacock of Montreal, President; Rev. Frederick Smyithe of North Dakota, Vice President; Rev. Norman Green of Huron, Second Vice President; Mrs. Annette Geiger of Central New York, Secretary; Miss Constance Vulliamy of Missouri, Treasurer; and Rev. Arthur Freeman of California and Rev. Henry Hobbins of Iowa as new directors.

Seminars were the study groups of the gathering, and among Anglicans leading these were Dr. Tollie Caution and Rev. William Davidson of the National Council, Rev. Ross Bailey of West Virginia and Rev. Francis Allison of Bethlehem. The opening address which criticized the movement

for its unconcern with theological renewal and ecumenicity was given by Dr. Robert T. Handy of Union Seminary. Although someone should have briefed him on the existence of international rural missionary movements, his coming from an urban atmosphere gave him the opportunity of making some pointed criticisms, and the main portions of his speech are in this CROSSROADS. The careful presentation of the transition to suburbia which is taking much of the population of the town and country areas was given by Dr. Truman Douglas, Executive Vice President of the United Church of Christ Home Mission Board, and its salient paragraphs are given in this CROSSROADS. We hope by this presentation to make those who were not able to attend feel that they were present in spirit. From now on the national Episcopal Conference will be held alternately with the National Convocation and as a separate Episcopal conference.

The lack of opportunity to talk back has been a constant complaint at these convocations but a panel on "Current Theological Conversations" turned into a free for all when it was opened. Dr. Douglas and Dr. Wesley Hotchkiss of the United Church of Christ, Tennessee Baptist James Hamilkins and Robert Moss, president of Lancaster Seminary, led the discussion into deep water and it stayed there when it got beyond the panel. Allegiance to God rather than to the community, Christ as Lord of all life, the church as the conscience of the community were the keynotes. Witnessing to the faith and renunciation of moral responsibility by the church were contrasted. The sociologist, Dr. Douglas, insisted mores are not moral and that sociological norms are no substitutes for the purposes of God. Moss insisted that "God is Lord of history, even of the Near East!" "The church staggers forward through history, and when there is no Lord of all life, the individual has to be pleased." A High Church Presbyterian quoted Cyprian and the Westminster Confession in support of the contention that only the baptized are in the church, but an Episcopal speaker noted that St. Augustine had said "Not all who are in the church are of it, and not all who are of it are in it." The final note was that the church can not speak as the body of Christ unless it suffers and sacrifices.

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Looking Toward the Future

From an Address at the National Convocation

By ROBERT T. HANDY

NO DOUBT I shall be embarrassed in later years as I look back on my remarks of today. If I may quote another Butterfield than Kenyon in Town and Country circles, Professor Herbert Butterfield once wrote "When we look back upon the past we see things fixed and frozen as they happened, and they become rigid in our minds, so that we think they must always have been inevitable—we can hardly imagine how anything else could have happened. But when we look to the future, while it is still fluid, we can hardly fail to realize its unspeakable liquidity."

This early twentieth century movement of renewal was evangelical;

was Christocentric and sought guidance and strength from the Bible. It was also a socially-minded movement; it was concerned with arresting and reversing some of the trends of a secularized society and with Christianizing it. It was a cooperative movement that saw clearly that a divided Protestantism was unequal to the evangelical and social task before it. It sought to have the major Protestant bodies confer together for mutual clearance and joint planning, and to link these bodies in a federative unity that their resources might better be brought to bear on society. This renewal movement—evangelical, social, cooperative—brought to birth the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, the Home Missions Council, the Council of Women for Home Missions, the Federal Council of the Church of Christ in America, and many other agencies. The rural church movement in its modern form in America was distinctly a child of this renewal movement. It was evangelical, it was social, deeply concerned with the effects of secularization in agricultural America, and it was cooperative, anxious to get the various branches of Protestantism to work together on the rural scene to eliminate overlapping on one hand and overlooking on the other. The contribution of the rural church movement to Protestantism and to America has been a great one.

Twentieth century conditions have, of course, been in intense and dramatic change ever since the storm overtook Europe and involved the rest of the world in 1914.

The full consequences of all this became ever clearer in this country in the 1930's. And in that dark decade there burst on the American scene another renewal movement within Protestantism, one quite different in tone and caliber from the one which had preceded it, one which felt itself much more relevant to the dynamically new conditions emerging in the stormy twentieth century. This renewal movement is complex, and has been known by various names; neoorthodoxy, the theological revival, the ecumenical reformation, the theology of crisis, the resurgence of biblical theology, and so on. At first it was sometimes presented in a contentious way, for some of its early exponents felt that only such an approach could make a dent on the American scene. This new renewal movement found much lacking in the earlier one, though it accepted many of its achievements and utilized the structures which it had built.

The supporters of the new renewal movement felt that the earlier evangelical-social-cooperative movement was too closely bound to the culture in which it grew up, and reflected too much the ideas and moods of that culture and not enough of the understanding of God, of man, and of the world found in the Bible and in classical Christian theology. The earlier renewal movement had hoped to Christianize the social order; the later one, schooled by war, depression, and the rise of the dictators until any hopes of easy progress had been swept away, saw this as somewhat utopian and idealistic. The earlier renewal movement had felt God to be very near and stressed his immanence; the later one felt the weight of his judgment and stressed his transcendence. The earlier movement had been impressed with the enlightenment concept of man as perfectible; the

later one found that the Biblical emphasis on man as sinner much better fitted the facts of man's actual existence. The earlier movement had been Christocentric, but the later one felt it has seen Christ too much in the image of its culture and not enough in terms of the full biblical presentation of the Christ. The earlier movement was Bible-loving, seeing the "Good Book" as a rich library of religious experience; the later one accepted the historical approach to the Scriptures but insisted that the Christian must read it also with the eyes of faith and that then its distinctive unity, uniqueness, and authority is clear. The earlier movement was much interested in finding out more about God from any available source—it often was concerned with general revelation; the newer movement has centered on the unique disclosure of God in Christ—it has focused on special revelation. The earlier movement was often impatient with theology, for it wanted to get a job done: "dogma divides, but service unites" was a motto sometimes heard. The later renewal movement has often been boisterously theological, insisting that the effort to apprehend as fully as possible God's disclosure of himself in Christ of necessity involves hard theological work. The earlier movement was cooperative in approach, feeling that federation among denominations for specific tasks was adequate; the later one, anxious to deal with fundamental matters of faith and theology, has advocated what may be called the ecumenical way, the search for a deeper level of agreement at the level of theological first principles and a continuing search for the God intended wholeness of the Church of Christ.

Not only has there been the emergence of a new phase in the sequence of renewal movements of Protestantism, there has also emerged some significant developments from the processes of secularization. The long established trends toward fuller industrialization and urbanization continue in Americal life, with profound effect on both rural and city life. Mobility in our culture is still on the increase, and the cultural pluralism that has long been so conspicuous in metropolitan areas is becoming ever more familiar in town and country. Probably many of you have been in communities into which new forces and pressures moved to disrupt familiar and often loved patterns and to introduce the stratified, associative culture of the city. It is a sociological axiom to say that mobility and pluralism make for increased culture contact which in turn tends to intensify secular modes of thought and life. What has especially disturbed the churches in mid-twentieth century life is the spread of the faith in the secular, secularism, the organization of life as if God really does not exist, one of the chief rival faiths of Christianity. Christians have always been deeply concerned with the secular order as such for it is part of God's creation, but the spread of the faith of secularism, as one of the consequences of secularization has made the mid-century situation quite different from that at the opening of the century.

First, it seems to me that the town and country church movement (along with many other movements in American Protestantism) should press from the cooperative to the ecumenical approach. Cooperative Protestant

m has been a highly significant movement which has made a very great ontribution, but its method of relating denominational activity without uch discussion of the basic issues of the faith is not fully adequate to ne demands of our time. The ecumenical way is for Christians of various eritages and backgrounds to reveal themselves and their deepest beliefs o one another in the conviction that all can thus learn more about the ches of the eternal Gospel and find in fuller terms the unity that has een given in Christ. The ecumenical way is not to be content with finding inimum agreements in matters of faith but in seeking maximal ones, nat the fuller glory of the Gospel of Christ may be more clearly exhibited. begins from within and not from without; it seeks to combine the eological and the practical that both may be richer.

The ecumenical encounter has thus far been too much the privilege of ational leaders and theologians; now is clearly the time for it to become ore and more the experience of the local community. The Oberlin Faith nd Order Conference of 1957 has opened the way for and prepared rich aterials for opening ecumenical discussions at local levels. Is it possible nat some of our community churches, which have at times been suspect n theological circles because they are believed to represent a vapid "lowest ommon denominator" Protestantism, can become genuine centers of umenical concern, anxious to reflect more of wholeness of the church n their own communities? A local church is not ecumenical simply be- ause it has representatives of many denominations in its membership; is ecumenical as its members strive to make manifest their oneness in hrist. And at its present stage of development, the ecumenical movement eeds very much the kind of ecumenical exploration at community and ongregational levels that your movement may be peculiarly fitted to rovide.

The second line along which the rural church movement may move into ne future is along that of ever deeper concern for the church. What is ne real role of church as church in the changing rural scene of today? ometimes, especially in reading older rural church literature, I have felt nat the primary frame of reference was the local community, with the nurch viewed somewhat instrumentally as one of the institutions that an serve the community and keep it healthy. The resulting tendency was or the church to reflect too much the life of the surrounding community. ut should not the church reflect ever more clearly the life of the Christ ithin, that it may set him forth ever more clearly? Now, I am not sug- esting that our focus ought to be primarily on the church as an end in self, but rather I am saying that our emphasis should be on the purpose f the church in the intention of God insofar as he has disclosed his will o us through Word and Spirit. And of course I am not saying that there nould not be continued and deep concern with the rural community as uch, nor that there should not be continued and implemented social and ociological emphasis. But is not the church drawn to the world because is drawn first to Christ who then inevitably sends the church to serve ne world? As the representatives of Protestantism's world mission ex-

pressed it at Willingen, "The nearer the Church draws to its Lord, the nearer it draws to the world . . . There is no participation in Christ without participation in His mission to the world." The church in any community situation should seek first the will of God made known through Christ for its life, and then it will find inevitably that it is driven to service in its community, but it will be able to bring into its service a unique dimension which can come from no other source if it does not convey it.

Finally, is not the church in town and country called to focus much attention on the family, expanding its already great concern here? The family is more and more being torn apart in American life, with terrible effects on all concerned. Yours may be the arena from which can come a new determination to strengthen family life as well as fresh guidance for preserving family life in these swift-moving times. Several years ago I read some words uttered by the late Don F. Pielstick which have haunted me ever since. He said,

> Working with a committee whose concern was children, it was shocking to discover that while we said the greatest need of these children was a well integrated home life, we were proposing a program for community action which, if carried out successfully, would take the children out of the home every hour they were awake. Such a program, however well intended, does not help to create the well integrated home life the children need. The same type of thing happens to the community. As a noted sociologist said to me recently, "I have always thought of the church as an integrating force, but if several recent studies are valid, it is one of the most disintegrating forces" (Home Missions Council, *Annual Report,* 1945, 30).

From your own literature I have learned of the steadily increasing non-farm character of rural populations. Historically the rural church movement focus has been deeply concerned with the farm; can it be that an important focus in the future is to be the family, both farm and non-farm? If the Christian family deteriorates, will not both church and community deteriorate also? Am I being overly sentimental in my belief that the town and country scene has some strategic advantages in seeking to maintain and deepen healthy home life, thus making a much needed contribution to churches in every type of community?

In summary, I have suggested that the modern town and country movement was born in the early twentieth century under the aegis of a Protestant renewal movement and into a secularized Protestant world. Since then, a fresh renewal movement has emerged in Protestantism, and the process of secularization has moved on, and the faith of "secularism" has more clearly emerged as one of its products. In finding its full role in the new situation. I have suggested that the movement take five lines as it advances into the future; in emphasis on an ecumenical approach, in deeper attention to the nature of the church, in greater concern for the world rural scene, in struggling with the problem of diversity and unity, and in intenser focus on the Christian family.

THE CHURCH

and the rural-urban fringe

By THRUMAN B. DOUGLASS

What is this rural-urban fringe?

Let us acknowledge gratefully that the term is more nearly self-explanatory than most of the words in the jargon of contemporary sociology, it almost says what it means. It refers to an area where city life and country life, city ways and country ways, meet. In this meeting they occasionally blend; more often they conflict; and perhaps most often they clash in such a way as to cancel each other out.

First, the recognition of the fringe area as an important social phenomenon in America is quite recent among students of society—probably not more than twenty years old. This interpretation of rural and urban is a relatively new phenomenon in American society.

Second, the sociologists are not wholly in agreement as to how this type of area should be defined. I shall not attempt to be a judge in this controversy among professionals. The most widely recognized criterion appears to be the use of the land. In one study of the territory around Detroit it was decided that any township in which the rural non-village non-farm population was fifty percent or more should be considered as belonging to the rural-urban fringe. Samuel Blizzard in his study of the fringe areas around Williamsport, Pennsylvania, developed what seems a good method of identification. He traveled all the outward-leading highways around the city. He considered as the outer boundary of the fringe the place where an urban pattern of living and land-use of some concentration yielded to a pattern of widely scattered acreage lots with non-farm type houses amid farms or to the use of land purely for farming and forestry. The inner boundary was the place where city services ceased to be complete.

Third, the rural-urban fringe is the scene of the largest proportionate growth in the numbers of the American people. During the last census decade and since, the greatest increase of population has occurred in the so-called "rural non-farm" category.

Fourth, it is certain that for many years to come the fringe will continue to loom steadily larger in the picture of American society. By 1975, three-quarters of all the people in the nation will be living in urban areas. Because the population movement is toward the urban areas but at the same time away from the central city, because many of the older suburbs are approaching the saturation point, it seems clear that while 85 percent of the urban growth predicted for the next fifteen years will be suburban, a large proportion of this will be in the fringe areas.

Fifth, the development of the rural-urban fringe must be understood as one aspect of the larger suburban trend—movement which, because of its explosiveness, Max Lerner calls "the suburban revolution." In two decades

(1934-1954) the population of the United States grew by 25 percent; but the suburban population increased 75 percent. Says Lerner: "The emergence of the suburb as the characteristic form of American place, supplanting as well as supplementing the city, has been so rapid, with consequences so far-reaching, as to be revolutionary." In the context of this revolution the phenomena of the fringe must be seen and understood.

Sixth, because the rural-urban fringe is the meeting place of different types of American culture—or at least of divergent images of our culture—it exhibits many of the most acute tensions, contradictions and self-deceptions in our contemporary life.

Seventh, it also exhibits what has become the characteristic method of resolving these tensions, which is not by synthesis, nor selection, but rather by the depressing way of homogenization. Sometimes one gains the impression that the result of the meeting of rural and urban cultures in the fringe is the accentuation of the worst features of both. But I suspect the more typical consequence is that each tends to annul and cancel the other out. There is a process of creeping debilitation that afflicts both patterns of society and leaves each impotent to maintain itself aganst the other and to enter into any sort of creative interaction with the other. The two are blended in such a way that the distinctive flavor of each is lost. This is homogenization. Someone has recently called attention to an advertisement in a seed catalog boasting that a new variety of tomato has been made completely non-acid. This is to say, remarked the commentator, that it has been rendered devoid of tomato taste. "This triumph of plant breeding is comparable to improving the hardness out of a diamond and the humor out of a joke."

An eighth fact will be clearly apparent to the reasonably objective observer. This is the extent to which the fringe community, despite the measure in which it contains in ts variety so many of the ingredients of the slick-paper American dream, is in an extra-ordinary way a place of frustrated purposes and disappointed hopes. And I would add that both the character of these hopes and the manner of their frustration are data of great importance for the church. It is to this subject that I wish to turn for a few moments.

There is the hope of finding roots—of gaining a sense of belonging. The actual outcome is very often a disillusioning discovery of the migratory and impermanent character of the rural-urban population.

There is the desire for better schools for the children—and the discovery that in the rural-urban fringe the schools, like all other public facilities, may be grossly inadequate to serve the swollen population. So the dream of better schooling dissolves in a nightmare of overcrowded classrooms, school days split into three short sessions, too few teachers, the inevitable taxi service performed by the mother, and the hostility of the old settlers toward every proposal for increasing the tax rate to provide for the children of the newcomers.

There is the hope of membership in a community, in contrast with the

impersonal, socially irresponsible conditions of much city life. Here again there is likely to be acute disappointment. Even intimacy of a certain kind can exist without human sympathy or understanding—as with the housing development women who gathered for the daily neighborhood baby-sitting date and endlessly discussed the training of children and the inadequacy of husbands: My Jerk of a Husband, and The Boy I Almost Married. These women knew one another with embarrassing intimacy; yet this intimacy led not to friendship but to hideous boredom and a kind of low-voltage, smoldering loathing.

Hopes of finding a place in a genuine community are defeated by the absence or inadequacy of community-making institutions and the dearth of essential communal facilities: churches, hospitals, libraries, good high schools, community centers, theaters, etc.

One of the most pathetic disappointments is the gradual fading of the hope cherished by many newcomers to the fringe area that in the new setting there will be a strengthening and renascence of family life. Here, it is expected, the family can find a common life of its own, released from the crowding, distractions and frenetic pace of the city. Before long, however, there comes the realization that "rurbia" presents its own problems and threats to the integrity of the family. One of these is the matriarchal character of suburban society. The suburb is a woman-dominated environment, the natural home of momism. A shrewd social worker employed in one of the counties adjacent to Washington raises the interesting question whether husbands become weak because they are victims of the matriarchal society of the suburb or whether they move to the suburb because they are weak. In any case, she says, in this environment, "women are almost entirely influential. The suburbs are also, however, largely populated by dependent, childish husbands. The usual pattern is that the wife is an aggressive person trying to create a home of her own. She gets him to buy a house they're really not able to buy, economically. She pushed him to the point where he weakens, buys the place, and then finds himself deep in debt. Thereupon she nags him for having bought a house they couldn't afford."

The absence of a large proportion of males during the working day—a day greatly lengthened by the time needed to travel the distance from the fringe area to the city—adds to the woman-dominated character of the community and militates against normal family life.

The lack of community institutions deprives the family of healthy outside interests. Young people, finding themselves without opportunities for recreation nearby, rely increasingly on the automobile as a means of getting away from home instead of finding encouragement to participate in family activities. So the presumed blessing of space, combined with the meagerness and remoteness of recreational facilities, becomes the foe rather than the friend of family solidarity.

From what I have said in the last few minutes it may be concluded that I regard the rural-urban fringe as a kind of immense spiritual junk-yard—like the automobile junk-yards that are likely to be so prominent a feature

of its landscape—filled with smashed dreams and worn-out illusions and wrecked houes. This is not my view. It would be absurd to deny that in this setting many persons are finding enrichment of their life and renewed enthusiasm for the human adventure. Nor ought we minimize the fact that many of the inhabitants of the rural-urban fringe were there before it became a fringe; that many of them were pursuing what was for them a good way of life; and that one of the sources of tension in these areas is their belief—frequently justified—that this good life will be destroyed by the forces of urbanization.

I have spoken of the seamier side of urban life because it highlights some considerations of great importance for the church. The impressive fact is that these frustrations and disillusionments are so common in an environment that seems to contain so many of the components of the American dream. Here are space, proximity to the countryside or a reasonable facsimile thereof. Here for many, added to this ready access to the rural scene, is the security of employment in business or industry. Here are the satisfactions of home-owning, of being a member of a neighborhood, or escape from the impersonality and anonymity of city life. Here—perhaps above all else in desirability—are the physical and mechanical accoutrements which in America are regarded as the guarantors of happiness. Here are gadgets—gadget unlimited. For suburbia is the automobile salesman's and the appliance vendor's happy hunting ground. Why, then, should not everything be serene and blissful in Paradise, U.S.A.?

What is the meaning of the fringe area for the mission of the church?

1. First of all, it is a vivid reminder to the church that there is no ultimate salvation in *locale*. To assert the decisive religious effect of *milieu* is to preach Baalism, the belief that the power of God is peculiarly present and available in certain places. And there is a great deal of Baalism in the Protestant church of America. It has been encouraged by the traditional practice of dividing responsibility for the planning and missionary program of the churches between specialists whose operational premises are related to considerations of locale. So we have urban experts and rural experts. Each group have developed their peculiar *mystique*—their own set of myths and romanticisms. Most of these are an offense both to the Christian faith and to common sense.

It would be absurb to contend that man as a living organism, rooted in nature, is not determined to a considerable degree by his environment. But the church's primary concern is for man as man, not for the landscape. And man remains man in the midst of an infinite variety of scenery.

In this setting we see the radical irrelevance of Protestant sectarianism and the acute need of finding new patterns of ministry and action. Amid the human diversity, the scattered distribution of homes, the lack of social organization that characterize the fringe area, denominationalism is as anachronistic as a plan for the return of the little red schoolhouse to replace the consolidated high school. The churches must learn to be broad enough in their sympathy and welcome to demonstrated the nature of

Christian fellowship as unity in diversity—a diversity as rich as that of the area they wish to serve.

The rural-urban fringe requires of the church that its ministry and lay leadership gain a large measure of sociological sophistication. There must be understanding of the complexity of the human interests and forces shaping the life of the area. Especially is there need for sympathetic understanding of the tensions between the new and the old. A typical phenomenon of the fringe is the resistance of long-time members of existing churches to the changes that are obviously required if these congregations are to serve the new community in the making. There is resistance to the demands of the younger people for a full-time minister, for a message more aware of the contemporary scene, for a parish house, for more varied activities. If these changes are effected, the resistance of the older people may express itself in the founding of nw traditionalist and fundamentalist congregations. The rural-urban fringe demands a wise and psychologically sophisticated pastoral ministry.

The church on the fringe is called to represent far more than it commonly does the insurgent, nonconformist movements of the spirit. Despite the variety of housing, of employment, of income, of cultural background, the pervasive and lethal threat to the authenticity and richness of life in suburbia is the menace of conformity. It is not so much uniformity of custom and thought as it is submission of external standardizing influences that work insidiously inward and ultimately standardize the response of the mind and heart.

Suburbia is the kingdom of the huckster. With the rapid growth of population and the vast market provided by activities of housing, feeding and equipping this population, the eye of the salesman has more and more been fixed upon it. And the objective of the salesman—perhaps mainly unconscious and inarticulate—is the submission of human life to standardization and dependable conformity of action. Success in his terms really means the subordination of existence to the appliance, the gadget, the commodity. From the appalling monotony and anti-human aspects of the housing development, in which chromium gadgets are substituted for space and convenience and honest construction—to the ascendancy of the shopping center as the dominant institution—to the demonic use of the status-urge by the salesman (so that the owner of a low-cost development house must have a power mower to cut his nine-by-twelve patch of grass because he would be ashamed to be seen pushing an old-fashioned muscle-operated machine)—to the incessant plugging of standardized products and standardized ideas via television—suburban existence often seems to be a massive plot against human individuality.

The church is called to bring persons into the presence of the God who knows them by name. It needs to remind man that his God-given vocation is to be an alien and a rebel in the universe, and to teach him that a religion which seeks to "adjust" him to his environment and to extirpate the God-made insurgency from his soul is the enemy of the spirit.

Finally, if the church is to serve redemptively in the midst of the culture

of the rural-urban fringe, it must understand more profoundly than it generally does the true nature of the "eternal verities"—the unchanging and timeless element in the like of man. A recent study by one of the major insurance companies reveals that if all the heart and circulatory diseases—the number-one killers in American society—should suddenly be conquered. the increases of average life-expectancy would be less than nine years. External facts change — and change at an accelerating rate. But some realities are essentially changeless. One of these is man's own mortality. If the Church is to deal relevantly with the realities of modern culture it must be able to deal with the old fact—but the fact that is now with us in a new way—of man's own impermanence—with the absolute precariousness of life in our time and with the imminent possibility of total extinction.

We have to recognize with a new seriousness than in this situation the simple moralism and optimistic hopes that were the content of much Sunday School instruction in the past are not sufficient for these days. The children and young people crowding the church schools today will need a more resilient and sterner faith if they are to make any sense out of this generation of total hazard.

Today we have to face the actual possibility of complete *dis*-continuity—no on-going life, no next chapter of the human story, no persons and no race to "remember."

What can faith say to this potentiality of our culture? Do the churches have any word to address to this issue? Are we able to say, as did our fathers—but now with a depth of meaning that comes of facing the ultimate issues of life and death: "Though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea, even from everlasting to everlasting Thou art God"? Can the communicators of faith sustain mankind in this extremity by imparting the knowledge that beyond the end there is still meaning because God has entered into the strife and agonmy of man's life through Jesus Christ our Lord, has declared Himself *for* us, and because in Him only may be found a truth, a mercy, and a salvation that are indeed "from everlasting to everlasting."

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ADDRESS OF SUMMATION

for the 1958 Convocation on the church in town and country

RICHARD O. COMFORT

IN the town and country church movement we have completed the bend in a long, slow, gradual curve in the road of our history. We have seen — in the past fifty years — many changes of theological, social and economic climate. We have seen the church, sometimes painfully and often too slowly, make its adjustment and response to these changes.

In this Convocation we have had the help of two interested and con-

erned "outsiders," Dr. Robert Handy and Dr. Truman Douglass. These nen with sympathetic and deep insight have helped us see ourselves as thers see us. In the past we have talked to ourselves too often and nave not listened to the analysis of those who do not claim to be a art of the Town and Country movement. The fresh insight we have eceived has been very revealing, interesting and stimulating.

With the help of the seminary students from Lancaster, Pa., we have aken a quick look at our past — and a glorious past it has been. As we turn our thoughts homeward we will be returning to our places f work with lives full of thanksgiving for those who have given of heir time, thoughts and talents to this movement. We have learned nuch from our history and have been inspired by the courage, dedica- iion, and vision of our past leaders. We can best honor those who nave gone on before by picking up the work where they have left it and neet the challenges of our day with insight into its problems and op- portunities, sensitivity to human need, awareness of the revolutionary ocial changes at work in our world, and in understanding the complicated tructure of our society. Realizing that the past often rests a heavy aand on the present, we must press on toward the goal of adequately hurching our country and our world with a program that will be com- prehensive enough to meet the unmet needs of all of God's children.

If I had been making this speech ten years ago my three main points night well have been 1) Man — the hope of the world; 2) The church s a social institution; 3) The community — a microcosm of the king- dom of God. It is just around the corner, you know. Popular in that lay at our convocations were the "This is how we did it" session. How lo we get on with the job? was the burning question. Today we are nterested in other things. We ask "why" questions and "what" questions. Ten years ago the popular seminary groups dealt with techniques of getting the job done in serving the community. At this convocation the popular seminars dealt with such topics as: Theology and rural life; ..ay leadership, and the rural-urban fringe. Ten years ago we didn't dare nave a seminar on Theology and Rural Life for fear that very unecumenical behavior might be exhibited at an ecumenical convocation.

Today for my three main points I turn not to some of my sociological friends but to that great leader and statesman of the early Christian Church, who has even been accused of being an industrialist — a tent maker. refer to Saul of Tarsus, who became Paul—the great Missionary of the New Testament Church. A man, who with a gospel of good news to share with his world, let absolutely nothing stop him in sharing with an un- friendly world his deep conviction that Faith, Hope, and Love were the three important words and concepts that the people of his world needed to base their lives upon.

We must have FAITH! First—Faith in God—His power and concern for His world and all of His children—regardless of race, class, economic or educational level. Dr. Handy has reminded us that our generation nas been justly accused of being one converted to the cunning and deadly

power of secularism. Too many of us, yes even those of us in the membership of the Church, are trying to live as if God did not exist. We worship and put our faith in the things of the world and wish that we had more of them. Second—Faith in our fellow men. We have been told that the number one problem of our world is the race problem. It is not just the Negro problem, or the white man's problem, or the problem of the American Indian, or of the African, the Chinese or the Pakistani. It is the problem of man wherever he is and of his lack of faith in and respect for his fellow man. We cannot love God whom we have not seen unless we love our fellow men whom we have seen. We do not act as if we believe that some people who are different from us are children of our heavenly Father and should be treated as such. Third—Faith in ourselves. Reinhold Neibuhr says, "Work as if the coming of the Kingdom depended upon you, but have the faith that its coming depends upon God." Faith in ourselves as we commit our lives to God involves the ability to communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Fourth—Faith in the future of the town and country church movement—and in its many challenges. If we are to meet the challenges that Dr. Douglass tells us about as he describes the growing rural-non-farm population group in the rural-urban fringe, the problems that the areas of declining population bring to us, and other situations in the town and country field we must have at least three things: 1. the facts about the situation; 2. a statesmanlike plan for meeting the needs and problems; 3. a method of implementing the plan. These three and the most important of these is implementation.

We have reported enough facts and plans to revolutionize the U.S.A. at this Convocation. But the devil is not worried for he knows that when we get home we will organize a committee and think that we have fulfilled our Christian obligation. Because of its importance faith in the town and country movement must be adhered to. The various denominations use their own census designation in defining a rural community. Some use 2,500 and some use 25,000 with others using the numbers in between. There exists the "no man's land" in the population group between 25,000 to 100,000 which needs cultivation. If we are intelligently sensitive to these newly developing areas of responsibility we will realize that we have never had as large and challenging job to do in the work of the town and country church. In addition to Faith we must have Hope. We must have hope that is based upon Christian faith. This hope will help us mediate the contagious joy of the Christian faith to the people of our world. Hope that is based upon the Christian faith will become a firm foundation for the lives of people as they wander over the face of the world in ever greater numbers in this age of jets and in which our daily newspapers tell us of the exploration of outer space. We are told that soon Home Missions will be confined to this planet while Foreign Missionaries will travel in space ships to their fields of work. Hope that is based upon the knowledge that God is still the creator and sustainer of our universe. Hope in the fact that man can be a co-worker with God in the building of His Kingdom as man utilized his knowledge of history, of

the findings and methods of the field of sociology, economics and related subjects. Hope in the possibility that man may learn to base his relations with his fellow men—not upon ignorance, fear, suspicion, or hatred, but upon the life and teachings of Him who gave us the story of the Good Samaritan, the woman taken in adultery, the man who healed on the Sabbath. Of the three — love, hope and faith — the greatest of these is love. The transforming power of Christian love is one of the areas which demands much more research, understanding and translation into our day by day living. The love of life — that mysterious gift from God about which we really know so little. Life in the world of nature and in the world of man still baffles even our most learned scientists. Long life which is full of challenges, problems and opportunities; long life which can be a thrilling experience as one tried to understand and live by the will of God. As we purify the knowledge of man with the will of God we come up with that distillation of knowledge plus action that our town and country people need so desperately as they seek to discover the meaning of life in our time.

Then there is love of our fellow men. As children of God we are called to love God and our fellow man, yes, even to manifest affectionate regard for one enemies. It may be that when the history of our generation is written two of the men who will be recognized as its outstanding leaders will be two ministers. Martin Luther King has taught all of us much about the transforming power of Christian love in recent months in his work in Montgomery, Alabama. Go home and read I Cor. 13 and think about what it is saying in terms of the transforming power of Christian love. Think also of Clarence Jordan who thrilled convocation delegates at a recent St. Louis convocation — even as they were thrilled they were challenged and humbled. Here is a man of principles cast out of the ministry by his own denomination, mistreated by his fellow man, persecuted by economic boycotts — why? Because Clarence has seen what can happen when Christian love gets in the driver's seat in the life of a person. This man, Paul, knew what he was talking about when he wrote that famous chapter on love. It is dangerous to really love your neighbor in the good old U.S.A. whether in the North, East, South or West. There are no geographical boundaries for love.

There is love of one's fellow man as citizens of one world. Can man learn to live together in peace in this our world? Upon what basis? Can the transforming power of Christian love help us overcome the barrier of race, denominational differences, national boundaries and the other things that so easily divide us? Social sciences can help us see and clearly define our situation today, but the transforming power of the Christian faith can redeem us from our sins and guide us in the paths of righteousness.

Let us consider the love of adventure — Our town and country people need to discover with us the excitement, thrill and adventure that comes to those who in Faith, Hope and Love seek to let their lives be transformed by the in-dwelling spirit of God. It is our hope that at the

next session of Congress the President will be requested and authorized to appoint another Commission on Country Life. What kinds of adventure would the report of such a commission bring to us? What new frontiers would it lift up to humble us because of past failures. Some would undoubtedly be frontiers such as: the growing rural non-farm areas; the large vacation and resort areas; the areas of declining population; the needs of the 80 to 85 per cent of the people who live in the villages and rural areas of the world.

There is adventure to be found in a consecrated life working through the Church of Jesus Christ. The Christian faith is dynamic, revolutionary and transforming. Seeking to live by it can be the greatest of all of life's adventures. It is the faith to which we, our congregations, and our world must give our loyalty, and our lives.

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Delegates to the National Convocation On the Church in Town and Country

Rev. Messrs.

W. Francis Allison, John A. Baden, W. Ross Baley, Walter A. Bell, Jr. James S. Butler, Bruce H. Campbell, John G. Carson, Dr. Tollie L. Caution. Charles L. Conder, C. P. Criss, James H. Cupit, Jr., William Davidson C. Carroll Eads, Charles E. Edinger, Theodore K. Evans, Arthur C. Free man, F. Paul Goodland, Charles G. Hamilton, Paul E. Hannaford, Ho bart E. Heitand, Davis C. Herron, Samuel N. Keys, Smith L. Lain, Ogden R. Ludlow, Stephen B. Mackey, J. Robert Marks, Walter W. McNeil, Jr., Turner W. Morris, and

Waldo I. Peterson, R. Douglas Pitt, Ralph W. Reamsnyder, William D Richardson, Minor Lee Rogers, S. A. Seaton-Elliott, Frederick K. Smyithe Charles F. Speakman, Wm. B. Spofford, Jr., Ernest St. Andrew, Philip Staples, John R. Symonds, Jr., Shelby Walthall, Rhett Y. Winters, Jr. Lloyd L. Wolf.

Harold Boundy, Walter Dyer, G. R. Gilliland, John E. Matheson, John Peacock, J. Peck, H. O. Slattery, P. R. Store, W. J. White, H. J. T. Webner.

VISITORS

Rt. Rev. Earl M. Honoman, Rev. J. Randolph Field, Rev. James B. Trost, Very Rev. L. Maxwell Brown, Mrs. W. Francis Allison, Mrs. James S. Butler, Mrs. James H. Cupit, Jr., Mrs. Annette E. Geiger, Mrs. John G. Hay, Mrs. J. Robert Marks, Mrs. Ralph W. Reamsnyder, Mrs. Ernest St. Andrew, Mrs. Philip Staples.

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A Methodist rural church in a Southern state which won an award for rural community work passed on its used hymnals and Sunday School literature to a Negro church.

DIVISION DOINGS

By the Staff of
The Division of Town and Country of the National Council

The National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country, held at ork, Pa., October 21-23 will have passed into history by the time *Crossroads* aders see this column. Elsewhere in this issue is a brief summary of events York which may begin to prove the wisdom or folly of the new policy the Division with regard to the Convocation.

This National Convocation, sponsored by the Department of Town and ountry of the National Council of Church is the annual meeting place five hundred to seven hundred persons, mostly ministers, whose common terest is the town and country movement as it affects their own church d all the churches. For the past several years there has been held in njunction with the Convocation, the Annual National Episcopal Con- rence on Town and Country work which has enabled the Episcopal urch to take advantage of the Convocation at the time of its national own and Country gathering, and in fact to have the largest and most presentative denominational delegation there. This year the pattern was anged, however, because there has been a growing feeling on the part those regular in attendance at the Convocation and Conference that e were somehow falling in between. In other words it seemed impossible have the kind of real Episcopal Town and Country National Conference e need and at the same time give proper attention to the Convocation d play fair with our brethren of other denominations in the four days me devoted to this performance annually. Consequently the Convocation as promoted this year on a regional instead of a national basis although me national attendance was obtained through the presence of several embers of the National Advisory Committee, and a good delegation om the Anglican Church in Canada. Bishops of Dioceses within two ndred miles of York were invited to send two official delegates on the sis of the diocese or individual paying $35.00 and the Division pay- g the balance of expenses. Bishops of Dioceses outside of this area ere invited to send one delegate on the basis that the diocese or in- ividual would pay full round trip travel and enroute expenses and the ivision would afford hospitality in York during the Convocation. No ecial sessions for Episcopal delegates were held at the same time as heduled Convocation session, and although the Episcopal group had a re-Convocation meeting on the eve of the Convocation's opening, and ncluded with a luncheon following its adjournment, there was no ttempt to carry Episcopal sessions on for a full day following the onvocation. The effort in all this was to have a reasonably sizable nd representative Episcopal church attendance at the Convocation, at moderate cost per delegate; and to allow these delegates opportunity participate fully in the Convocation and yet have occasion to meet nd know each other as Churchmen.

As a sequel to this planning, however, it should be made clear that the Division has plans to hold the first of a series of *biennial National Episcopal conferences* on Town and Country work beginning with a Conference at the National Town and Country Church Institute on *Roan ridge Farm* near *Parkville, Missouri, April* 13-16, 1959. This conference will be promoted by a letter to be sent to Bishops shortly inviting them to name one official representative to the Convocation on the basis of the diocese paying the first $75.00 of his total expenses and the Division assuming the balance. At this meeting the delegates will concentrate on Episcopal Church Town and Country problems and policy and may come up with some significant findings and plans.

Because the National Episcopal Conference will only be held every other year according to the new plans, it is hoped that the Division may be able to assist in the promotion of Provincial or Regional Town and Country endeavors on alternate years in the springtime, and continue annually to promote the National Convocation in October in whatever regional area it is to be held.

The Christian Rural Fellowship which holds its annual meeting at the Convocation (mentioned above) is an interdenominational and international group of clergy and lay persons concerned to promote Christian ideals for agriculture and rural life, and to foster fellowship among all those who possess this concern. While the Christian Rural Fellowship membership is presently largely within the United States, it has branches in the Philippnes, Nigeria and India and many individual members scattered elsewhere around the world. Members of the Episcopal Rural Workers Fellowship are also members of the Christian Rural Fellowship according to a membership arrangement operating between the two organizations. That is why you Rural Workers Fellowship members receive regularly the Christian Rural Fellowship Bulletins and "Rural Missions" published by Agricultural Missions, Inc., President of Christian Rural Fellowship during the past year has been Clifford Samuelson, Executive Secretary of our Division. Dr. I. W. Moomaw, Christian Rural Fellowship Secretary-treasurer is happy to send further information about the fellowship from his office at 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, New York.

The Newsletter of the Division in its third issue should have reached you before this copy of *Crossroads*. Sent without cost to all Town and Country clergy in the Church, the Newsletter brings information of interest and importance to these men. Amidst many difficulties the Division attempts to keep the mailing list current and accurate and to include all those who shall properly receive it. Some Rural Workers Fellowship members may receive two copies because of duplicate mailing lists. If so, pass the extra copy along to someone else. Comments and suggestions about the Newsletter are always welcome.

Executive Secretary, Clifford Samuelson concluded his responsibilities in connection with the National Town and Country Church Institute (Roan-

dge) Student Training Program with a fine student evaluation con- rence August 18-21 and the Supervisors evaluation on September 30- ctober 1. He preached at the Seventy-fifth anniversary of his former arish, St. Paul's Bellingham, Washington on Sept. 14th and visited field rojects of the Division in the Diocese of Olympia at the same time. He ad planned to attend the rural work conference to be held in Vancouver, ritish Columbia, Canada, September 15-18 but this meeting was can- lled shortly beforehand. As chairman of the Christian Rural Fellow- ip and member of the Board of Directors of the Rural Missions Co- erating Committee, he has been called upon to attend several meet- gs in preparation for the Convocation. General Convention and prepara- on for it required much of his time in October and his responsibilities Director of the National Town and Country Church Institute at Roan- dge continue to make demands upon him.

Associate Secretary, Bill Davidson also attended the student evaluation nference at Roanridge in August. He has handled details of prepara- ons for the Episcopal delegation to the Convocation at York. On St. Matthew's Day he preached at St. Mark's Midland, Ontario, Rural Work- rs Fellowship member Lloyd Delaney's parish and spent the week follow- ng in Toronto attending a meeting of the Commission on Missionary ducation. This also enabled him to meet with the Town and Country ommittee of the Diocese of Toronto and visit Trinity and Wycliffe Divinity Schools. He attended the fall supervisors conference and the dvisory committee meeting of the Parish Training Program for New ngland, September 29-30. In mid-October he visited in the northern ortion of the Diocese of Maine and preached at the Harvest Festival of t. Paul's, Fort Fairfield, described in the last May issue of *Crossroads.*

The Division of Town and Country Work is pleased to receive questions r comments from readers of *Crossroads.* Please address inquiries to the Division, 281 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, New York.

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NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members to the Rural Workers Fel- owship:

Mr. J. Jaquelin Ambler, 1707 Duke St., Alexandria, Virginia
Rev. Vincent Anderson, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Elk Rapids, Michigan
Mr. L. Seeley Burns, Rts. 1, Grand Junction, Michigan
Rev. Robert W. Dunn, Box 422, Winner, South Dakota
Rev. Walter E. Giles, Tioga-Tompkins Mission, Box 248, Candor, New York
Rev. Philip C. Jefferson, S. Sandalwood Place, Don Mills, Ontario
Rev. Henry M. Jones, 41 Pine St., Whitinsville, Massachusetts
Rev. F. A. Peake, M.A., 6050 Chancellor Blvd., Vancouver, British Columbia
Rev. W. S. Schroeder, 108 S. Highland Ave., Pierre, South Dakota
Rev. Elliot Sorge, Box 89, Oakes, North Dakota

Rev. John W. Vickers, 215 Poplar St., Libby, Montana
Rev. Roger H. Wood, Box 96, Moab, Utah
Mr. Lyle Young, 145 Pearl St. West, Brockville, Ontario

FOR CHRISTMAS PRESENTS GIVE CROSSROADS

To greener pastures—changes of address:

Rev. John A. Baden, Soldiers Lodge, Cardwell, Virginia
Rev. W. W. L. Balthis, Box 852, Gastonia, North Carolina
Rev. John Battle, 104 E. Live Oak St., Cuero, Texas
Mr. Francis M. Bradley, 40 Platidell Rd., Penfield, New York
Rev. W. H. Breyfogle, Trinity Church, Melrose, Florida
Rev. Arnold B. Chapin, 4 Dogwood Rd., Annapolis, Maryland
Mr. B. Shephard Crim, Christ Episcopal Church, Sheridan, Montana
Rt. Rev. W. M. Davis, 414 Barrington St., Halifax, Nova Scotia
Rev. John W. Day, Jr., All Saints Church, Wheatlands, Wyoming
Rev. A. F. Dowdell, Mohawk Rectory, Indian Reserve, Deseronto, Ontario
Rev. John S. DuBois, 276 Walton Street, Englewood, New Jersey
Rev. Stuart G. Fitch, 1137 Bloomingdale, Duarte, California
Rev. John Fralick, 14 Wonderland Drive, Scarborough, Ontario
Rt. Rev. F. P. Goodard, 2726 Tanglewood, Tyler, Texas
Rev. John M. Galagan, 107 W. 9th Ave., Ritzeville, Washington
Rev. James R. Gundrum, 4018 Council St. NE, Cedar Rapids, Iowa
Rev. Samuel N. Keys, 526 So. Pine Ave., Arlington Heights, Illinois
Rev. Ogden Ludlow, New Milford, Pennsylvania
Rev. R. C. Kilbourn, 334 East Aurora, Ironwood, Michigan
Rev. Roy E. LeMoine, 5409 Eugenia, Columbus, Georgia
Rev. S. C. Lindsay, St. Mark's Church, Church St., Cocoa, Florida
Mr. Skiddy M. Lund, 463 Hawthorne Ave., Yonkers, New York
Rev. Wm. Melvin Maxey, Trinity Episcopal Church, Aston & Church Sts. Asheville, North Carolina
Rev. J. A. D. Meakin, St. Andrew's Rectory, Colinton, Alberta
Mr. William S. Pregnall, Ridgeland, South Carolina
Rev. Gordon P. Roberts, St. John's Episcopal Church, Dickinson, North Dakota
Rev. Vernon Robertson, 3300 Greenhill Lanem, Louisville 7, Kentucky
Rev. Lawrence J. Rowe, Church of the Good Shepherd, Windom, Minnesota
St. Philip's Church, The Rector, 125 Main St., Easthampton, Massachusetts
Rev. S. A. Seaton-Elliott, 104 S. Maple St., Mt. Carmel, Pennsylvania
Rev. Allen Sither, 15 Mansfield Ave., Essex Junction, Vermont
Rev. Wm. Spofford, Jr., 109 Main St., Byfield, Massachusetts
Rev. R. M. Turpin, 18 Dahlia Ave., Dorval, Quebec
Rev. J. P. Williamson, Main and Community Sts., New Roads, Louisiana

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We appreciate the circulation the Province of the MidWest gave to the report of its scholarly meeting in the last edition of Crossroads.

A Pattern for the Rural Church

CAPT. THOMAS G. WHEAT
Church Army

Peter describes the Church thus: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." The Revised Standard Version reads "God's own people" instead of "a peculiar people," and "declare the wonderful deeds" instead of "show forth the praises." Speaking to the individual members of the Church, he says, "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

No distinction is made between ministers and lay people. In speaking of the people of God as a priesthood, he does not single out the Bishops or Elders as a priesthood. The whole body is the priesthood. Each of the people share in this priesthood. Lay people are not contrasted with ministers and clergy. The whole Church is contrasted with the world.

Later, he addresses the elders or presbyters as shepherds: "The elders . . . I exhort . . . feed the flock of God . . . neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock."

It remains for Paul to make further distinction between the members of the holy nation and royal priesthood with regard to each ones special ministry in the whole body. He says, "Now, ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly, teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." In Ephesians, he compares the Church, the body of Christ, to a temple, as did Peter, and then says, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of ministry." (The ministry, as the King James has it, does not seem to translate the intended meaning to us today.) Where the elders, spoken of by Peter, appear in the lists of Paul, is a question. Can you answer it? According to Peter, the elders were shepherds or pastors. This places them in the second list of Paul, but not the first. Since pastors generally teach, they may be included among the teachers. On the other hand, pastors lead and direct, so they may be included under governments.

Certainly no clear division between clergy and laity, as we use the terms today, can be found in any of this. It seems unreasonable to suppose that all the gifts listed in these passages were given only to the elders and bishops. Moreover, we have no record that a person was ordained by laying on of hands, to a healer, a teacher or a prophet. Rather it seems reasonable, that there were no clergy, as we understand the word today. There were no professional ministers educated for this job unless the twelve apostles, themselves, can be so considereed. Also, it seems reasonable,

that these different jobs in the Church belonged to different people and were in fact distributed among the laity.

Of course, there were clergy, in the sense of leaders, ordained by laying on of hands, but their importance does not appear until it is time to furnish a Church with the officers needed for it to continue independently. These elders are important in the organization of a Church but not particularly so in its ministry. What did they actually do? What are they? Perhaps they were principally presiding officers in the assembly, administrators of the sacraments, leaders in policy-making, a visible center of unity with the apostle who ordained them, and so with Christ and the universal Church.

In the modern development of the Episcopal Church, or of any Christian Communion, it is hopeless to suppose that a duplication of the Church in the Apostolic age is either possible or God's will for today. The supposition of the so-called Church of Christ that is, seems to me to be a fool's dream and plain worshipping of the New Testament rather than Christ. On the other hand, the continuation or duplication of a medieval or reformation pattern, as an ideal, is equally a fool's dream. Furthermore, any development that nullifies or denies the plain revelation of what the Church is and of what its ministry is, must be less than ideal, to say the least. The Roman view, that the Church is the priesthood, making the laity spiritual parasites on a sacramental bloodstream, administered by the priests, is a denial of the Scriptural teaching.

CONDITION OF THE CHURCH TODAY

The position or office of elder in the New Testament Church, is the prototype and origin of the present-day priesthood. Yet, consider the difference. The elders were probably what their name implies—mostly older men—certainly men of stability and experience. Today the priest in a rural congregation is often a young man, often with little actual experience of life, particularly rural life, and with little stability of tenure. Then, the elders were members of the congregation, who were elevated to their office by ordination. Now, they are professional men, trained for the task and sent in from the outside to lead the congregation. Then, there could be several elders in a congregation. Now, we have one priest to two or three Churches and for part of the time.

In the face of this, we do something that was never contemplated in New Testament times, when plenty of elders were available; namely, center so much authority and so many duties in the priest, that nothing can be done without him. We are much too close to the Roman Catholic pattern, without the Roman attitude to authority that might conceivably make it work. This is the dilemma: An educated professional eldership furnishes us with insufficient elders; at the same time, it makes us more dependent upon the elders we have.

Nowhere in the nation could we outwardly duplicate the New Testament Church even if it were desirable, because Church law will not let us provide elders or priests as they did. Paradoxically, it is only by a return

to the New Testament idea of the Church, that we can find a way out of this dilemma.

WHAT ARE THE PATTERNS THAT WILL NOT WORK?

The rural Churches that depend on the continuous presence and leadership of priests are doomed to a stagnant, powerless form of existence and ultimate dissolution, for they just won't have them.

Any philosophy of the rural Church that is merely a transplanted urban or suburban philosophy will not work. Solutions to the rural problem that start with the supposition that an Episcopal Church cannot succeed without a resident priest, and that *with* one it may, are futile. Under present worldly conditions in the Church, we cannot get priests to stay in rural missions, even, if we pay them as much as in smaller parishes. There will have to be a spiritual revolution in the Church, that includes drastic changes in our placement system and a conversion in our seminaries, before we will be supplied with priests for all "cures" or congregations equally. The statement, that the Episcopal Church cannot succeed without a priest, is a pathetic admission anyway. Other Churches do. Why are Episcopalians so much weaker, if our Church is so much better? It is only because priests have taught them to be so, otherwise, our Church is not so much better.

Actually, I can document cases, both where Church Army was involved and where it was not, that Episcopal Churches continued, and in some cases prospered, without resident priests. In some cases, these Churches were started by laymen. In many cases, the sole function of the priest was to administer the Sacraments. If a priest is so all-important, how? In the next section, I shall consider "How?", but suffice it to say, now, that our rural churches are evidently not going to get enough clerical leadership. They can do without it. Let's face facts and stop talking about how to get priests into rural work as if this were the key to solving our rural problem anytime in the near future. Let's adopt a pattern that accepts lay leadership for the rural Church.

THE PATTERN THAT WORKS AND WILL WORK

(1) As the Churches are now constituted, they depend on the outside clerical and lay leadership that can be provided, and they will continue so do so for some time to come. The first step is to train this outside leadership, both present and future, to work themselves out of a job; to train them to teach others to take over their jobs and train them in the philosophy of the Church that will make this possible. Unless this step is undertaken, both in Rural Church Institutes and the instruction of new men in the rural field, by their Bishops and other supervisors, the second and third steps won't amount to anything.

(2) Then let the clerical and lay leaders, who have been trained and sent into the local Church from the outside, teach the resident lay people to take over their jobs of teaching, conducting services and transacting Church business. This is the absolute minimum that must be done, to train teachers, lay readers and mission committeemen. For real progress, musi-

cians, lay visitors and leaders of prayer and study groups, should be raised up. Then let him require these lay ministers to function!

(3) At the same time, let the diocese or other responsible unit provide for sacramental ministrations and for somewhat more clerical help and guidance than a Bishop usually can provide. This may mean an archdeacon or a diocesan missionary. The place of the priest in this pattern, when he is no longer administrator, teacher, pastor, preacher, prophet and evangelist, all rolled into one, may develop in two directions. If a resident priest stays in such a Church (or while he stays in it) he will be pastor to a great extent. Certainly he will administer the sacraments. Second, he can be a teacher of the teachers, just as during the initial training period.

He is the center of unity and doctrinal stability. Third, he can engage in definite advance missionary and evangelistic work or branch out as general overseer for some other missions without clergy. The other direction that the ordained man may take, is to become the diocesan missionary or archdeacon. In this post, he is still pastor, insofar as the sacraments are concerned and, when possible, he is still the teacher of the teacher. If he can provide for Holy Communion once a month, the members will be no worse off than most city Episcopalians, for few of the latter take the sacrament more than once a month, when a priest is in residence. He is still the center of unity, perhaps in some ways more so than a resident man.

CONCLUSION

The above pattern will work in rural situations, where the population is fairly stable and not too thinly scattered. It will work in small towns and mill towns. Some aspects of it may be applicable to old-line Episcopal parishes in city and suburbs. It will not work in migrant situations or in missions, where the population is changing, at least not during the change. It will work in favorable situations, only if points one and two are faithfully observed. Appointment of an archdeacon is only a stop-gap, unless these points are carried out.

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A Farmer's Prayer

Dear Lord, I do not yearn for a golden street
Nor gates of pearl; I only ask of Thee
That when I pass, let me my loved ones meet,
And give me sight and shade of leafy tree.

Give me a garden with some flowers to tend,
Their fragrance with the smell of clean dirt blend.
May there be singing birds, some butterflies on wing—
A touch of earth in the land where angels sing.

Grant there a sward, where happy children play,
In the place of life and everlasting day;
And may there never be a hurt or pain
To mar their joy or break their glad refrain.

O let there be some straight and lovely rows
Of cotton, blossoming in quiet, stately pose;
And let me breathe the fragrance of the air,
Perfumed by earthly blossoms carried there.

I am not grumbling, and I know that you
Could make a world of finer, lovlier hue.
You understand, kind Lord, my country feet
Would find hard traveling on a golden street.

I make this prayer in full and perfect trust,
In Thee who made man out of earth's good dust;
There is no loss within Thy Sovereign reign,
Worlds may be shaken but all good remains.

—Norvin C. Duncan

—oOo—

Benediction

May the Grace of Christ enfold you,
Now and evermore!
May the love of God uphold you,
Now and evermore!
May the Holy Spirit hold you
In communion, close and sweet,
With Himself, the Paraclete,
Now and evermore!

May the Three in One withhold you
From each smallest thing unmeet,
From all sorrow of defeat,
Crown you with Their joy complete,
Now and evermore!

May They give you helpfulness
To your fellows in distress,
And the greatness to possess
Your high soul in joyfulness;
So, in all things, may They bless
You for evermore!

—John Oxenham

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Whether you are a layman or woman . . .

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